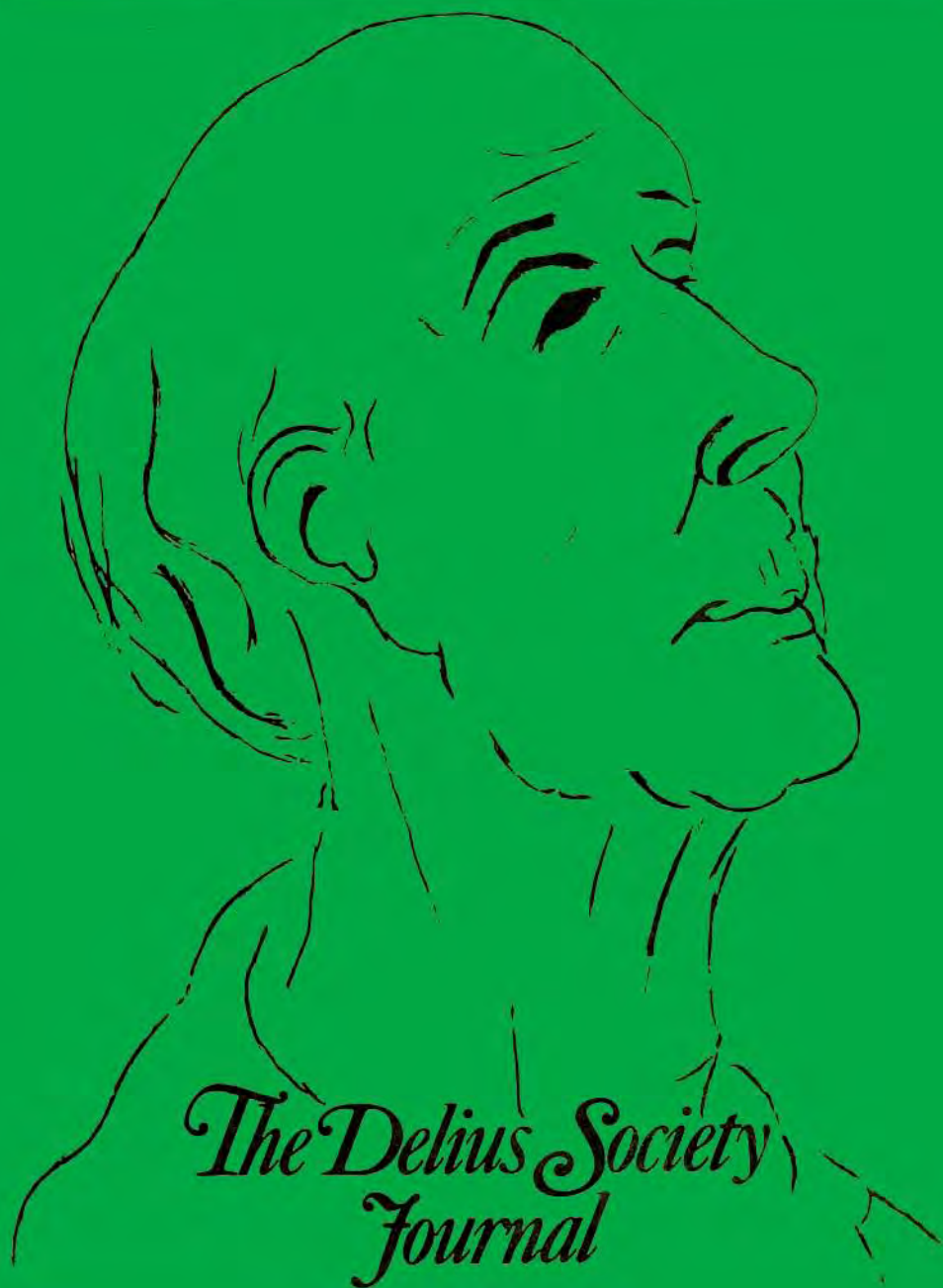

July 1976, Number 52



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*The Delius Society
Journal*

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● My quotation from Horace (Journal No 51, Editorial), although taken directly from 'The Daily Telegraph' appears to have been incomplete. I am grateful to Mr JG Hall of Winchester for supplying the full quotation:

*non sum qualis eram bonae
sub regno Cinarae. Desine, dulcium
mater saeva Cupidinum,
circa lustra decem flectere mollibus
iam durum imperiis.*

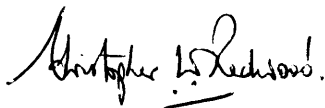
Addressed to the goddess Venus it means *I am not the man I was under the reign of the good Cinara. Cease tormenting me, cruel Mother of the sweet Loves, now that I am in my fiftieth year and hardened against your soft commands.* There is, of course, a moral here: don't believe all you read in the papers, and don't neglect your Latin!

● Mr DR Scorgie has kindly sent me a programme of the concert at which Joyce Barker sang two Delius songs, 'Cradle Song' and 'Love's Philosophy', together with Grieg, Bridge, and others at Sandown, South Africa, on 11 February. Sandown is a new city complex to the north of Johannesburg, built up by the wealthy who were no longer allowed stables in urban areas. (I believe they are rather charmingly referred to locally as the 'mink and manure set'.) The concert was organised by the Rotary Club in aid of a Cancer Home.

● News of publications this quarter is confined to books rather than music or records. A full-scale account of the life and works of Percy Grainger written by John Bird is due in September from Elek Books. Peter Pears has written: '*I am totally enthralled ... You have produced a very well balanced book about an unbalanced genius*'. There are 320 pages, the price is £7.50, and the ISBN 0 236 40004 5. Christopher Palmer tells me that his book on Delius has been delayed once more, and is now due to appear in the late summer.

● A number of readers have asked whether Ray Osborne's picture of Grez (Journal No 49) is available for separate purchase. The artist has accordingly prepared a limited number, mounted on card. These may be had, price £1, from:

RJ Osborne Esq, 5 Horse Shoe Green, Sutton, Surrey.
The price includes inland postage, but overseas members should make allowance for postage, according to whether they require air mail or surface post. While on this subject, I would like to thank those American members who made generous allowance for the exchange rate of the ailing pound when ordering 'A Delius Companion'. I may add that I have not grown rich as the bank (which, of course, is among the poorest of British businesses) charges around 30p (54c) per check to convert from dollars to sterling!



In his book 'Delius as I Knew Him', Eric Fenby describes how, shortly after leaving Grež to spend the Christmas of 1931 with his parents, he suffered a nervous breakdown. He had recovered sufficiently to be at Sir Malcolm Sargent's rehearsals for the first performance of 'Songs of Farewell' in March 1932, but he did not return to Grež until 1 September of that year. Other visitors came, however, and in recent months I have had the privilege of meeting two of them. By good fortune both took some excellent photographs whilst at Grež, and were in fact responsible between them for five of those reproduced for the first time in the recent volume 'A Delius Companion', while yet others appear here for the first time.

The first of the writers is Evelin Gerhardi, niece of the painter Ida Gerhardi, Jelka's great friend and former companion at Grež. As a girl of seventeen Evelin Gerhardi was invited to stay there, and as a result spent nine months, from January to September 1932, helping in the house. She was a competent pianist and linguist, and one day was surprised to be informed that an English singer named Cecily Arnold would be arriving the next day to sing to Delius, and that she would be required as accompanist. Sadly, Cecily Arnold died in 1974 but her husband, Mr Marshall Johnson, a nimble near-octagenarian, survives her and lives in a charming 16th-century cottage in Oxfordshire. He was kind enough to show me the letters from Jelka which his wife preserved, the photographs and other memorabilia from their visit, and also - incredible though it may seem - some pressed flowers from the garden at Grež.

Here first is Fräulein Gerhardi's memoir, written in response to a request I made when she and her sister attended the 1975 Annual General Meeting and Dinner of The Delius Society.

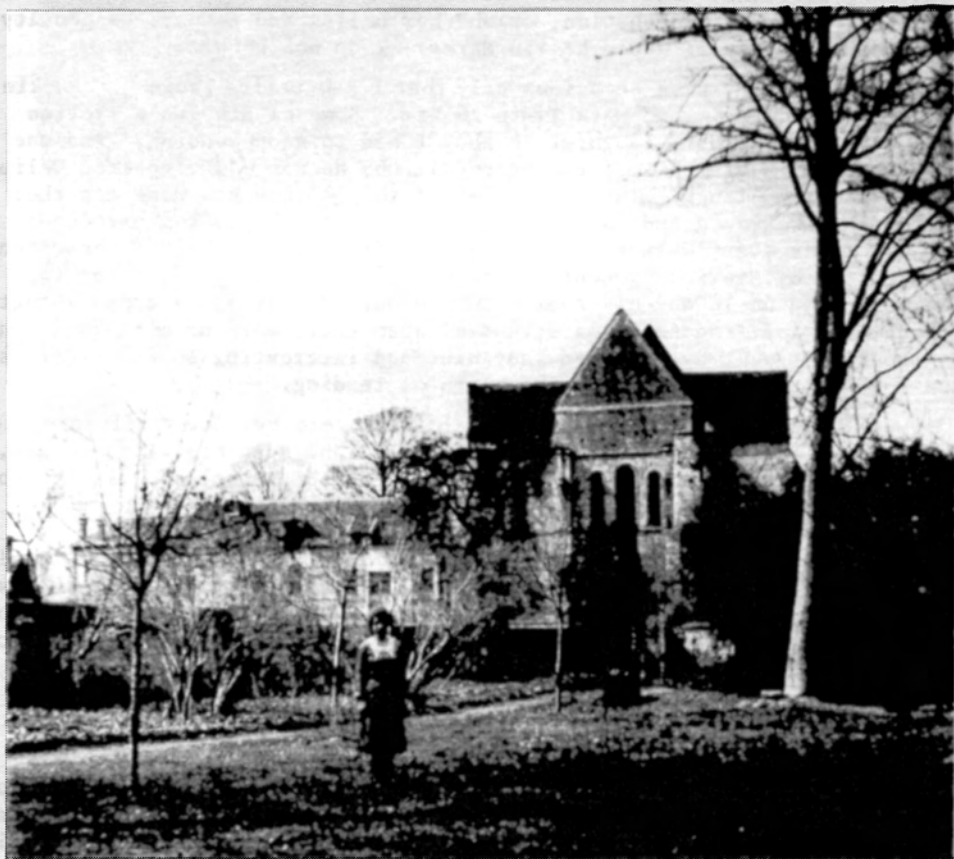
My Reminiscences of Frederick and Jelka Delius at Grež-sur-Loing
Evelin Gerhardi

When my sisters and I were young children the name of Frederick Delius was often mentioned in our home and we knew him to be a composer who lived with his wife - to us she was Aunt Jelka - in France. More than that, there was, in our drawing-room, his portrait by our Aunt Ida Gerhardi (our father's eldest sister) who was a painter. It was through her that the friendship was established; she had gone to Paris to continue her studies and later persuaded her friend Jelka Rosen, also a painter, to join her there. Ida was introduced to Delius by Jelka who was later to become his wife.

Ida was a very good friend of both Jelka and Fred and frequently stayed with them after they had moved to Grež-sur-Loing. From the very beginning Ida was fascinated by his music and it was through her that conductors like Klemperer, Nikisch, Busoni, Schuricht and others became acquainted with Delius's compositions and performed, in the years to

follow, many of his works. Meanwhile Aunt Ida had left Paris and made her home in our father's house and there were frequent letters going to or coming from Grez-sur-Loing. After Aunt Ida's death in 1927 it was her younger sister Aunt Lilli Gerhardi who continued the correspondence and one day received a letter from Aunt Jelka suggesting that I should come to Grez to help her a bit in the house, but chiefly to read to Delius who was then blind and paralyzed. So, early in January 1932, I went by train to Fontainebleau where Aunt Jelka met me; then André the chauffeur drove us to Grez in a funny little car - now probably considered a fabulous oldtimer.

Aunt Jelka introduced me at once to my various duties and I was quickly integrated into the household which was run on very strict lines. This was a matter of necessity owing to the delicate state of health of Delius. He was, quite naturally, the central figure around which everybody and everything else kept circling. To me Delius was an awe-inspiring personality and although I called him 'Uncle Fred' I never felt



Evelin Gerhardi in the garden at Grez,
with the church in the background

towards him as I felt towards Aunt Jelka, whom I loved dearly. She was a marvellous woman, very well educated, highly gifted, warm-hearted and full of humour. We had many a laugh when working in the garden in spring and summer or shopping in the Fontainebleau market or going for short strolls on the other side of the river later in summer when the days were long and after Delius had been taken to bed by his male nurse. Aunt Jelka told me of many funny incidents which happened when Delius was still in good health and when they were able to travel. Most of these I have forgotten as it was all such a very long time ago, but one still remains in my mind. Once, when the two of them were travelling on a train in Germany, Delius wanted to get up, so he groped in the air and when he found something to hold on to he pulled himself up by it. Immediately the train gave a shrill whistle and came to a stand. The Deliuses were very puzzled by this until eventually the guard came into the compartment and demanded: *'Why did you pull the emergency brake?'* Delius was very confused and said that that had not been his purpose, but that he simply wanted something above his head to hold onto as he got up. Whether the guard was satisfied with his explanation, or whether Delius had to pay the penalty of 50 Marks (today it would be 150 Marks), I do not know!

It was on very rare occasions only that I saw Delius laugh or chuckle, for instance when I read Mark Twain to him. Some of his funny stories made me double up with laughter so that I had to stop reading. And one day there was a visitor - I cannot recall who he was - who cheered Delius up and made him laugh. They talked about things they had done together when both were young and those must have been very happy reminiscences because I never say Delius so gay. When I first read to him I was often rebuked for my American accent. Before coming to Grez I had spent two years with an uncle and his family in the United States. I suppose that I gradually lost the American accent because there were no more complaints as the months went by. I read many nice and interesting books to Delius and I must say that I enjoyed the hours of reading.

Due to Delius's poor state of health there were but few visitors while I was in Grez. One of them was Cecily Arnold who sang his songs to him, some of which were in German. I remember that she sometimes asked me to give her a rough translation to see if she had grasped the meaning correctly. She also sang the Verlaine songs which to me are the most superb compositions of that genre by Delius. Cecily Arnold was extremely nice and I felt quite sorry when she left. Although she was a few years older than I, I had enjoyed the company of a young person; there were not many of my age at Grez. Moreover, I had not been asked to come there to enjoy myself, but to help.

There was also a short visit from Balfour Gardiner, the former composer. He had quite turned away from music, never listened to a concert and never wrote any music himself any more. At that time his hobby was planting trees and vegetables, and he certainly did live up to his name. At another time James Gunn came to paint a portrait of Delius. I have but a dim recollection of him, but I remember very distinctly Eric Fenby, of whose work for Delius Aunt Jelka had told me. I found him to be a very entertaining young man and was pleased to listen to him at lunch or dinner, when he often made Delius laugh.



'Les Belle Jardinières'

Jelka Delius and Evelin Gerhardi in the garden at Grez in 1932



The redoubtable Madame Grespier, Delius's housekeeper,
with Hildegard the maid

Then came the month of September and my departure was drawing near. Although I found Uncle Fred a rather stern person I had enjoyed my stay at the Delius's home immensely and, I believe, learnt a great deal. Spring had come early that year and for long months the lovely garden and the river had been fascinating. Then there was the season of the nightingales, birds which were never seen but heard all night. The neighbour, Alden Brooks, did not seem to esteem their heart-melting songs; he would get up at night and clap his hands loudly in order to shoo the birds away - an action which only resulted in his waking up all his family while the nightingales poured forth their sweet songs louder than ever. Mr Brooks's complaints in this respect were a source of great amusement to Aunt Jelka and myself. I should add that he was a very nice man otherwise, and I got to know him and his family quite well, even spending a weekend with them at their town-house in Paris.

When I was in Grez-sur-Loing I was a young girl, rather inexperienced and - as we might say today - still undeveloped. It was only much later that I was able to fully appreciate what Eric Fenby had achieved for the lovers of Delius's music all over the world and what Aunt Jelka had been to Delius. She had not only given him a home where he was able to work undisturbed, she had given up her own life for his sake, contented to be his devoted wife and faithful companion in happy days and during long years of illness and solitude. Eric Fenby's work with Delius required not only professional skill, but more so, a high degree of musical sensibility and a special gift to sense and guess his intentions. I am sure that there are world-famous artists who could not have done what he has done. I cannot imagine what would have happened if he had not been there while Aunt Jelka was almost on the point of dying herself. It must have been an awful and profound experience for a young man like him. When I read his book 'Delius as I Knew Him' I thought what a blessing Eric Fenby had been to Uncle Fred and Aunt Jelka.

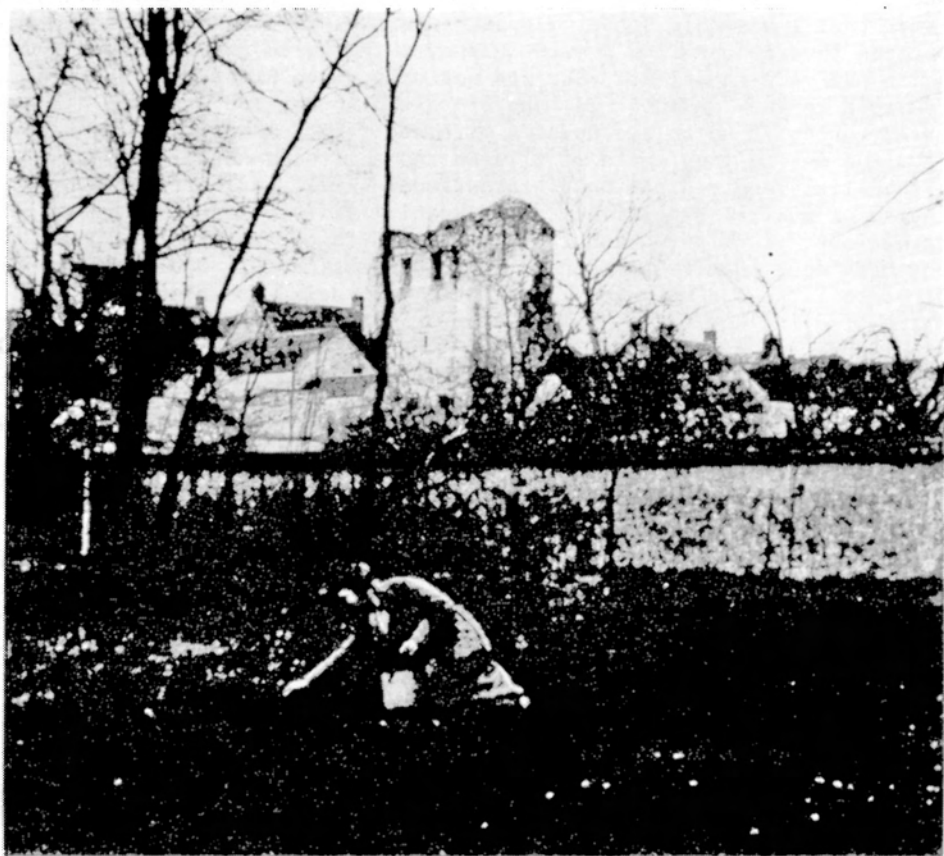
With my sister I revisited Grez and Aunt Jelka early in 1935, and we were deeply grieved to hear of her death later that year. But I am extremely happy to say that I met Eric Fenby again - after 43 years - on the occasion of last year's Annual General Meeting of the Delius Society in London, and I don't think he can have changed much in all these years because I recognized him at once.

The visit Cecily Arnold made was a shorter one, from 26-31 March 1932, and her husband was with her for part of this time. The account she wrote of it was published in 'The Music Teacher' of April 1950, and has been reprinted in 'A Delius Companion'. Prior to the visit she exchanged a number of letters with Jelka, in one of which she enquired who was the 'Addie Funk' who was listed as translator in her copy of the Five Danish Songs (the printing of November 1928). Jelka, replying on 7 November 1931, was equally mystified and asked for further details, at the same time giving the assurance that Delius made

all these translations himself. This led to Jelka asking Miss Arnold to contact the publishers, Universal Edition, and it is interesting to see that later printings of this set of songs omit the words 'English version by Addie Funk'.

Cecily Arnold and her husband arrived in Grez-sur-Loing on Easter Saturday afternoon, and stayed at the pension which then existed just across the road from Delius's house. After tea she had her first rehearsal with Evelin Gerhardi, (it lasted just half an hour!), and then Delius was carried up to the music room. The piece de resistance of the recital was 'Avant que tu ne t'en ailles', which the composer was hearing for the first time. To her mother Miss Arnold wrote:

"Gosh! I'll never have a worse audition! However, he liked the first song and only suggested one addition. Then I sang the new one - with what trepidation!!! He had no single criticism to offer - said it was



Cecily Arnold gathers flowers in the garden
against a background of Queen Blanche's tower, Easter 1932

PENSION DE FAMILLE

M. CORBY

Bords d'Eau

CREZ-SUR-LOING (S.-&-M.)

Location de Bateaux de Pêche

R. C. Montereau 2101



Madame Johnson

Doit

Le 3. Mars 1932

Imp. André Lesot. Nemours-B 1269

du 26 au 31	5 ^e jours de pension	
	Madame à 35 ^e p. jour	175
31	1 dîner en supplément	15
28	1 café	1
29	2 café	2
30	1 08 de blanc 1 ^e 2 café 2 ^e	6
31	1 café	1
		200
	Service 10% sur 190 ^e	19
	Total	219

Cecily Arnold's account at the pension -
compare with present-day prices!

beautiful and asked me to sing it again - it was just as he would have wished it sung!!! Then I sang 'I-Brasil' - he wanted that twice, and 'The Nightingale' and 'White Lillie'. Then he was tired and we stopped, but he is looking forward to tomorrow - when I shall have had a better rehearsal with Miss Gerhardi".

After supper, Jelka kissed her on both cheeks and paid her the most reassuring compliment she could have wished for: "My dear, he likes you!" In another letter Miss Arnold wrote:

"Jelka is a dear! She told me that some time ago when they were in London, William Walton came to see them, and he sat for 2½ hours and never said a word in spite of all her efforts - he was so shy!"

During the five days of her stay she sang to Delius each evening, and Jelka later told her that she had never known him to be carried up to the music room on five consecutive nights. Indeed, it was his wish that she should record his songs, but before the necessary arrangements could be made first Frederick and then Jelka died, and the project came to nothing.

Mr Marshall Johnson, a former Professor of viola da gamba, recalls that the only song on which his wife and the composer were not in complete agreement was 'To Daffodils', which Cecily saw as a happy song. Delius, however, preferred to think of it as a sad one. Mr Johnson also recalled Jelka telling him a slightly different version of an anecdote which appears in Beecham's book. One day, when she was painting a nude model in the garden, she suddenly looked up and saw the priest watching them through field-glasses from a high position on the neighbouring church. The following day the same thing happened again - but this time there were two priests, each armed with a pair of field-glasses. Shades of 'Clochemerle'!

After they had left Grez, Miss Arnold corresponded regularly with both Jelka and Evelin Gerhardi. From one of the latter's letters comes interesting information about the way in which the garden was organised:

"We have so terribly much to do in the garden. Mrs Delius plants her flowers every day. You see, early in spring, she sows the seeds into a hot-bed; after some weeks they are taken out and put into little flowerpots, each plant by itself, and when they are big enough they are planted somewhere in the garden. My job is to clean the flowerpots and I kept on counting; today I washed No 386. Still the hot-bed looks as full as some weeks ago when we started. Around Whitsuntide the lilac and laburnum were at their best, now we have masses of roses - and there are still later ones to come - white pinks, poppies and aquilegia".

She also kept rabbits in the garden, having at one time nine of them. In another letter she tells how the river had flooded, its normal 20 metre width having increased to cover nearly 200 metres of land. It half-covered Alden Brooks's garden and even encroached into Delius's.

Originally this programme was to have dealt with both Balfour Gardiner and Norman O'Neill, but Stephen Lloyd explained that he had found so much interesting information about the former composer that he had persuaded Malcolm Walker to postpone his half of the programme until a later date.

Gardiner was born in London on 7 November 1877, the son of a wealthy business man who gave every encouragement to his early interest in music; he began piano lessons at five and was composing by the age of nine. His younger brother (whose birth caused their mother's death) became Sir Alan Gardiner, the Egyptologist who was involved at the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb. After schooling at Charterhouse, Balfour went to Frankfurt to study music. Fellow students (with their ages in 1896) included Roger Quilter (19), Norman O'Neill (21) and Percy Grainger (14); these became known as 'The Frankfurt Gang'. Gardiner was the central figure, around whom the other friendships revolved. He studied piano, like Cyril Scott and O'Neill, under Uzielli, a pupil of Clara Schumann (who was also a Professor there). His greatest influence, however, was his composition teacher, Ivan Knorr, friend and biographer of Tchaikowsky, and a brilliant teacher who had been recommended to Frankfurt by Brahms.

It was revealing to learn that Balfour, brought up on strictly classical lines, had to listen to the 'Tristan' Prelude six times before he could make anything of it, and 'Die Walküre' on first hearing struck him as *incoherent and [he] could detect no melody or harmony that appealed to him*. Although he possessed, in his own words, *an exuberant harmonic imagination*, Stephen Lloyd told us that his musical apparatus was limited, and this was allied to what Cyril Scott described as *a mournful belittlement of everything he wrote ... a hyper-self-criticism that was to be his undoing in the end*.

A none-too-successful period of study at Oxford punctuated his Frankfurt days, followed by partial paralysis of the hand through over-practice, which ended dreams of becoming a concert pianist. Instead he became prominent, with his other Frankfurt colleagues, in London musical 'at homes', notably at the house of Gervase Elwes and his wife Lady Winifred Elwes. Vaughan Williams and Poldowski were other regular attenders. Here Grainger would coerce the assembly into rehearsing his part-songs, in which Balfour sang with his hands over his ears (as did a soloist at Delius's 1899 concert, it will be remembered). His 'String Quintet' was performed in 1903, the 'English Dance' at the 1904 Proms, the one-movement quartet in 1905 and 1906, while in 1908 Beecham gave his 'Fantasy for Orchestra' and Wood the revised version of the early symphony at a Prom.

He probably met Delius for the first time in 1907 when he began a series of regular visits to Grez. After a short period of teaching at Winchester he moved to Oxfordshire, then settled at Ashampstead, near Reading. Around 1909 he wrote his most popular work, 'Shepherd Fennel's Dance', apparently the only surviving part of an opera based on Hardy's

'The Three Strangers'. His crowning achievement, said Stephen, was a series of eight concerts of (mainly) modern British music in 1912-13. These were actually one of three series of sponsored concerts at the time, the others being due to Edward Mason and FB Ellis (both shortly to be killed in the Kaiser's War). Mason had conducted 'Sea Drift' in 1911, while one of Ellis's concerts contained the first performance of the revised version of 'In a Summer Garden' under Geoffrey Toye in 1914. Gardiner featured Elgar, Parry, Stanford, Bantock, Holst, Vaughan Williams and Bax, as well as the Frankfurt Gang; composers conducted where possible. Kennedy Scott's Oriana Madrigal Society, of which Mr Thomas Beecham had been a founder member, made several appearances. Unfortunately it appears that Balfour's somewhat 'spoilt' upbringing led him to be tactless in his handling of the orchestra, to whom he unwisely admitted his lack of conducting experience, and this was a major reason why the series did not continue. Gardiner's benevolence did, though: just one example was the 'present' he made Holst of the first performance of 'The Planets' under Boult in 1918.

After this we heard some amusing anecdotes of a holiday he took with Arnold and Clifford Bax and Holst. Throughout he emerged as a focus of friendships, selflessly generous, a person of strongly-held opinions, and often very amusing. He referred to *old Bach* and *that congregation*, while Beethoven (whose music he had loathed since Frankfurt days) was '*a wicked old monkey*'. Even his friends were not free from criticism: Vaughan Williams was '*a miserable composer*'. The war, however, changed him, and he only wrote a handful of pieces after it. By 1925 he had left his home at Ashampstead where, in his own words, *music left me*. He moved to Dorset where he built a new home at Fontmell, south of Shaftesbury, and here, assisted by his nephew Rolf, devoted himself to afforestation. He planted over a million trees, reclaiming some 1500 acres of scrub land. Concurrently he took a flat in Oxford, where he kept up a close friendship with Tovey, and there was some evidence of a renewal of interest in music.

Being the perfect English gentleman of fastidious tastes, it was not surprising to learn that Gardiner fell out with the carefree Beecham at an early stage. As is well known, he bought the house at Grez in order to help Delius over a difficult financial patch, allowing him and Jelka to continue living there rent-free until the death of the survivor: a typical act of Gardiner generosity. Delius drew up a will which included plans for the house, and provision for an annual concert of the music of younger British composers, together with one of his own. Beecham considered this impractical and brought his own solicitor to set up a Trust fund for the performance, publication and recording of Delius's music. Balfour, hurt that Delius's wishes were not met, withdrew as executor and sold the house.

He died in 1950 and, as Stephen Lloyd commented, it is to be regretted that he did not live long enough to contribute to Hubert Foss's reprint of Philip Heseltine's 'Frederick Delius', published in 1951, as did his friends Percy Grainger and Kennedy Scott. Our grateful thanks to Stephen for a well-researched and thoroughly absorbing evening.

Christopher Redwood

'A Mass of Life' at Bradford
Saturday 10 April 1976

AT THE Delius Centenary celebrations in 1962, which brought such honour to Bradford, one major work was missing from the Festival programmes. This was the "Mass of Life," the composer's most ambitious and impressive choral work, in which he makes a strong bid for immortality.

Which is ironical, since Nietzsche's "Zarathustra," from which the text is culled, is a pantheistic and ecstatic dithyramb in praise of life here on earth as opposed to that of a possible future state. This life is all, and must be grasped boldly and to the full, the gospel of master-morality as against slave-morality (identified with Christianity).

It is, none the less, a text filled with contradictions (it was written as a protest against the alleged sub-Christianity of Wagner's "Parsifal"), and forgets one important part of the Christian Gospel — that Our Lord also came that we might have life more abundantly. In fact, Zarath-

ustra is more poet than philosopher, imparting a doctrine not far removed in essence from the ideals of a revitalised Christianity.

Be that as it may, it was a text (at least in its more poetic fragments) that appealed to Delius in his personal views of life; and though it may have seemed an odd work to present at the beginning of Holy Week, the justification was in the work itself, as music, and in the historical fact of this Bradford premiere. It was sung in German.

Sir Charles Groves conducted a splendid and memorable performance.

The opening of the so-called Mass is one of blazing glory, and the Bradford choir — transformed these days under the training of the brilliant Roy Rimmer — sang it like a host inspired, not least revelling in the great weight of sound in this superb double chorus.

Sir Charles, who has recorded the work, knows it in every detail, and not only the singers, but his own Liverpool Orchestra

responded with an impressive awareness of musical detail, which was at every point greatly affecting. Quieter portions of the work had a stillness and loveliness of their own, wrought of the Delian magic, with some superb orchestral contributions, and the marvellous closing section dealing with "Night and its Message," was tellingly beautiful.

There was also a fine quartet of soloists, led in this instance by Benjamin Luxon, since most of the narration falls to the baritone, but with excellent support from Vivienne Townley, Anne Collins and Gerald English. Mr. Luxon proclaimed his message with remarkable ease of style, sensitive to words as to musical nuance, and altogether inside the part.

This concert was a triumph for all concerned, and the Festival Choral Society (though it needs more males) is obviously enjoying a new lease of life. Delius would have been proud of it.

ERNEST BRADBURY

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Two members have written to say how much they enjoyed the performance. Mr C Jennings of Goole, who kindly sent the above cutting, wrote: "It was marvellous.....from the first opening section with everyone going flat out (the music certainly came off the page here) to the final midnight song". He added that during the interval, in the bar, he heard such comments as "Good mystical stuff" and "What super music!"

Mr Robert Aickman sent me a copy of a letter he wrote to Sir Charles Groves afterwards which began: "I have attended in my life five performances of Delius's 'Mass', including three under Sir Thomas Beecham, for whom on all occasions my admiration was and is very great indeed; but I enjoyed none of them more than your remarkable performance in Bradford". He went on to suggest that a performance of 'A Mass of Life' in the city of its composer's birth should become an annual event. In reply, Sir Charles promised to consider the idea, but added that at present the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra only gave two concerts annually in Bradford, apart from 'The Messiah' and Christmas Carols.

On Friday 19 March the members of the Midlands Branch descended upon the home of Peter and Margaret Trotman in Nottingham to be entertained by the Delius Trust Archivist, Lionel Carley, and to hear his talk, illustrated by slides and film, entitled 'Delius - a Life in Pictures'. None of those who foregathered expected such a varied and entertaining evening, featuring as it did home-movies, unique colour-slides and a number of Delian musical tit-bits gathered from vastly different and diverse sources. The whole was enlivened by a highly informative spoken commentary in which Lionel proved not only what a widely-travelled person he is, but also what an excellent repository of little gems of interesting information a good archivist's mind really is.

We began with a fascinating prelude of home-made cine-film taken in and around Grez-sur-Loing several years ago, which was a revelation to those of the company who have not yet had an opportunity to visit the former home of the Deliuses. Grez was seen in that hazy, colourful heat of high summer so beloved of impressionist painters and paraphrased so well in mood by some of Delius's nature works.

We then changed to colour-slides which took us through Delius's life, from earliest days at Claremont (now alas demolished), through schooldays and college, to Florida for an excellent series of views of Solano Grove as it is today, the preserved Delius plantation-house and modern downtown Jacksonville. Lionel moved next to Leipzig, and then Paris for scenes familiar to Delius during his years there, including paintings and busts, most of which were completely new to the audience and will feature in the forthcoming picture portfolio which Lionel is producing in collaboration with Robert Threlfall, and which is due to be published later this year. More shots of Grez followed including some of the village characters (one being the Deliuses' chauffeur), followed by a brief interlude at Biarritz where Lionel traced the faint scent of the Deliuses and unearthed a few fragments of correspondence, and several interesting Delius busts by his friend Henry Clews.

Altogether a most fascinating evening for all, and our grateful thanks go to Lionel both for preparing his talk specially for the Midlands Branch and for travelling north to deliver it in such an interesting way.

Brian Radford

News from America

The concerts conducted by Eugene Ormandy in Philadelphia on 7 and 8 May which we have innocently advertised in our last two issues as including 'In a Summer Garden' suffered a number of alterations of programme, writes Bill Marsh. Delians had to be content with 'On

Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring' as a substitute, and according to the 'Philadelphia Inquirer' *"the atmosphere was not held with the care it needs. Instrumental gloss took over at moments when something a good deal less would have created a stronger impression"*. 'The Evening Bulletin', however, found that the piece *"came out lush and ardent"*, and asked *"Why don't we hear more Delius here"?*. Bill Marsh's laconic comment was: *"It seems that every six or eight years Ormandy feels he must play Delius and we always get the 'Cuckoo'....we should give him the bird"*! Sadly, no works of Delius are listed in the Philadelphia Orchestra's prospectus for this summer or next season.

On 24 April the New School of Music presented a recital, publicised only a matter of days before, which included the Delius 'Cello Sonata, played by Paul Eves ('cello) and Kari Miller (piano). Bill Marsh managed to attend along with Mr and Mrs Walter Posmontier, David Duke, Alex Hart, Jay Donner and Michael Knerr. It was the first time any of them had heard a live performance of the work, but the performance was hampered by intonation problems and a lack of strength at critical places. A little earlier, on 5 February to be exact, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra included 'A Song of Summer' in a concert given under Henry Lewis in Carnegie Hall. Although Harold C Schonberg, writing in the 'New York Times' found the playing *"colorful"*, other listeners thought the orchestra sounded coarse, and Harriett Johnson, in the 'New York Post', wrote that the piece was *"so loud and active it could have been depicting a lively regatta on the Thames"*! In the theatre three consecutive performances of the ballet 'Romeo and Juliet' with music by Delius were given at the Metropolitan Opera House on 11 and 12 June (matinée and evening), the advertisement for which was kindly sent by Mr Richard Foose (see his letter on page 20). He added that since 1968 the American capital has heard 'A Mass of Life', 'Koanga', 'A Village Romeo and Juliet', 'Songs of Farewell' (three times), 'Paris', 'Florida', and the Ken Russell film four times, besides shorter works by Delius. Prior to that 'Sea Drift' was performed in 1963 and 1967, and in 1965 'A Mass of Life' was done with Todd Duncan, Gershwin's original Porgy.

Finally, 22 April saw a whole evening devoted to the music of Percy Grainger at the McMillin Theatre, Columbia University, and was undoubtedly the cause of a long and appreciative piece on that composer by Harold C Schonberg in the 'New York Times' three days later.

Records for Sale

All the following may be obtained from DV Ford Esq, 46 Wellington Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

'Summer Night on the River'
Beecham/RPO (old) D1638, 40p

'Evening Voices', 'Cradle Song' and 'The Nightingale'
Dora Labbette/Beecham L2344 50p

'Brigg Fair'

Beecham and Symphony Orchestra L2294/5 75p

'On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring'

RPO (old) L2096 50p

'Walk to the Paradise Garden'

RPO (old) L2087 50p

'Song of the High Hills' (Auto)

Beecham/RPO etc DB9151/3 75p

'Walk to the Paradise Garden'

Barbirolli/Hallé C3484 25p

Intermezzo and Serenade from 'Hassan' and 'La Calinda'

Hallé/Lambert C3273 25p

There is also a copy of Reginald Nettel's 'Music in the Five Towns', price 40p, if anyone is interested.

Readers are invited to contribute details of their needs or of items for sale to this column.

Correspondence

Songs of Farewell

Dear Sir

Your comments on the performance of 'Songs of Farewell' at Guildford (1) (which unfortunately I did not attend) prompt me to enquire whether I am alone in finding this the most moving of all Delius scores and in thinking it to be his crowning achievement. It has received high praise: Professor Hutchings calls it 'magnificent' (2) and Deryck Cooke describes it as 'one of [Delius's] strongest works' (3); but Sir Thomas Beecham, although he paid lip-service to its 'hard masculine vigour' (4) seldom performed it and never gave it the seal of his approval by recording it. This has perhaps caused some people to relegate the work to the position of an 'also-ran', deserving of notice more because of the circumstances of its composition than from intrinsic musical merit.

If Beecham was lukewarm, others, fortunately, were not. In particular, Sir Malcolm Sargent seems to have been a consistent champion of the work, giving the first performance in 1932 and finally recording it more than thirty years later. AV Butcher gives an interesting account (5) of another performance by Sargent at a Royal Choral Society Concert in 1934, when the work was played as a memorial - and a very fitting one - to the composer who had, of course, died earlier in the year. Sargent must surely have had a particular affection for the work and even if the first performance was not all that it might have been (according to Arthur Hutchings (6)) he more than made up for this with his fine recording of 1965. Is it fanciful to suppose that he regarded this

performance - which must have been one of his last recordings - as his own 'Song of Farewell'? It seems to me to reveal a depth of feeling that one does not always associate with this conductor's work.

I never play this record without feeling a profound sense of gratitude - to Sir Malcolm Sargent for this performance, to Eric Fenby, but for whom the work would never have been written down, and to Jelka Delius for her inspired choice of words (and much, much more besides).

'Gratitude' is not perhaps an adequate word to express one's feelings towards Frederick Delius himself.

Anthony Childs, Sherborne

- (1) Delius Society Journal No 50, January 1976.
- (2) Hutchings, Arthur. 'Delius' (Macmillan 1948) p55.
- (3) Cooke, Deryck. 'Delius the Unknown' in 'Proceedings of the RMA' 18.12.62.
- (4) Beecham, Sir Thomas. 'Delius' (Hutchinson 1959) p208.
- (5) Butcher, AV. 'Walt Whitman and the English composer' in 'Music and Letters' vol28 p154.
- (6) Hutchings. op. cit. p98.

Future Delius Recordings

Dear Sir

The new Journal is most outstanding in printing and format. The drawing of the Grez-sur-Loing house has reproduced excellently. You must be delighted with the result.

For overseas members the précis of the lecture by Professor Hutchings is of tremendous interest and value. I have always regretted that talks given at Theobalds Rd etc, could not be put into print. May I beg that one of these articles appear per Journal? 'Delius and Munch', 'Delius and Strindberg', 'Delius and Warlock' must have been absorbing talks. Delius's Paris Years we fortunately have as a booklet.

Now that a third Delius opera is about to be endisced, is it not time for 'Hassan' and all the incidental music to be planned for as no 4? Could Fredman be approached? Perhaps every member would guarantee to buy a set of the records? As Delius composed some 60 songs, is it within the bounds of possibility that all this little handful could be recorded complete, including orchestral versions and piano versions of the same songs, with different singers? Could not the Delius Trust and all the members of the Delius Society and a recording company not make such a plan become a fact? What about Peter Pears as the co-ordinating chairman for its realisation?

Douglas Scorgie, Johannesburg

I am very much aware of the need Mr Scorgie mentions in his second paragraph; indeed, I believe it was one of the original purposes of the Journal. This issue contains a précis of Stephen Lloyd's talk on Balfour Gardiner, and I hope to be able to keep to this pattern. Editor

Ballets to the Music of Delius

Dear Mr Redwood

I am enclosing an advertisement from the New York Times of 25 April, for the Ballet Theatre performance of a number of ballets at the Metropolitan Opera House. One of the works to be performed is the Delius-Tudor 'Romeo and Juliet', about which there has been some discussion in the Society's Journal. I find it hard to understand why this ballet is so little known in the UK. It may be somewhat of an exaggeration to refer to it, as this advertisement does, as a 'popular repertory favourite', but it has been performed by the company with some regularity. It was the first ballet performed at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, September 1971. Juliet was danced by the Russian defector Makarova, who said in an interview that it was her favourite ballet, and she singled out the music as being especially beautiful.

The Dictionary of Modern Ballet is correct in its listing of the music of Delius employed in the ballet. 'Eventyr' includes the shouts, which become Montagues vs. Capulets. 'Walk to the Paradise Garden' is the Balcony Scene, and the 'Irmelin' Prelude accompanies a scene in the bridal chamber, as I recall.

The music was arranged by Antal Dorati. I have taken the opportunity afforded by Maestro Dorati's presence here to write him, asking him something about the background of the work, and if I hear from him I will report back to you. He certainly did some work on the music, if only to reduce the scoring for a theatre size orchestra. I believe he also made some cuts in 'Over the Hills and Far Away', 'Eventyr', and possibly 'Brigg Fair'. He should also be able to settle the question of who chose the music, Dorati or Tudor. If Dorati fails me I will write to Tudor.

Richard Foose, Washington DC

Forthcoming Events

26 June 1976 7.30pm

AGM of The Delius Society, followed by a buffet dinner.

11 September 1976 7.30pm

'Last Night of the Proms' including 'Sea Drift', sung by Benjamin Luxon with the BBC Choral Society and Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Charles Groves. (This is the only Delius work in this year's Promenade Concerts.)

Royal Albert Hall

23 September 1976 7.30pm

Delius Society Meeting

Details to be announced later.

Holborn Public Libraries, Theobald's Road, London WC1.
